A

VINDICATION

Of the late

Biſhop *BURNET*

FROM THE

CALUMNIES and ASPERSIONS

Of a LIBEL, entitled,

A

SPECIMEN of ſome free and impartial REMARKS, &c. Occaſioned by Dr. *BURNET*'s HISTORY of his own Times, by *JOHN COCKBURN*, D. D.

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From the Calumnies and Aſperſions of

Dr. *COCKBURN.*

A Writer of Hiſtory would juſtly deſerve to have his Veracity called in queſtion, who ſhould write in ſuch a manner as to offend no Party nor private Perſon. For it would be more than probable, that this Hiſtory did not tell the Truth. We ſee the Actions of Men too faulty in this Age, to be able to give Credit to any account which ſhould repreſent the Tranſactions of the former Age as blameleſs. The Degeneracy would be too ſudden. And it would be ſtill a further ground of ſuſpicion, as to the Fidelity of an Hiſtorian, if he ſhould be found to make thoſe of one ſide always to have been in the right,

and thoſe of the other always in the wrong; the one without Vices, and the other without Virtues. An impartial Man, when he delivers Hiſtory, will diveſt himſelf, as much as poſſible, of all biaſſes to any ſide; and will not withhold the truth, even where it tends to the diſreputation of the Party, which he has generally choſen to act along with. And conſequently, as the Conduct of Men and Parties always has a mixture of Good and Evil in it, and is neither perfect in one nor the other; ſo it is moſt likely that a faithful and unbiaſſed Hiſtory will repreſent things in that manner. It is not neceſſary indeed, that the Hiſtorian ſhould have been of no Party himſelf: For he may have been a very ſincere and judicious Perſon; (which are the two great Qualifications of an Hiſtorian;) and yet have joined to that ſet of Men, who, notwithſtanding many Errors which he may have obſerved in their Conduct in ſeveral particular emergencies, ſeemed to him upon the whole to have been carrying on the true Intereſt of his Country. And, if he is found to acknowledge, and blame thoſe wrong Steps of his Party, he confirms greatly his Character of impartiality and wiſdom; and ſecures himſelf againſt miſtruſt from all candid and intelligent Readers, on account of his being known to have acted generally with one ſet of Men. And indeed, how could a Man have acted a part conſiderable enough to qualify him

him for an Hiſtorian, without having had himſelf a ſhare in the Tranſactions which he gives an account of? And how could he have had ſuch a ſhare in publick Affairs, without having acted with one ſide or other? For, in the divided ſtate which this Nation has unhappily lain under now for a long time, it is not poſſible for a Man to acquit himſelf of his Duty to his Country, unleſs he will join with thoſe who he thinks are moſt diſpoſed to ſerve its true Intereſt in the main, and even bear with thoſe faults in them which it is not in his power to rectify. And if a Man retires, and reſolves not to meddle at all in concerns of a publick nature, becauſe every thing will not go as he would wiſh, I am ſure he cannot be a very proper Perſon to write the Hiſtory of the Times he lives in.

I think Biſhop *Burnet*, the Author of the Hiſtory now in queſtion, tho' it is well known that he was always in his life time of that Party of Men, who were for preſerving our Religion from the attempts of Popery, and our civil Liberty from the Invaſions of Arbitrary Power, has yet in his Poſthumous Hiſtory, ſhewn as unbiaſſed a Diſpoſition as can be expected from any Man in ſuch Circumſtances. He has been equally free in relating the Errors and Faults of his Friends, of his Enemies, and even of himſelf. And what more could have been deſired of him? Unleſs ſome Men would have had him to abuſe his Friends unjuſtly,

unjuſtly, and extol his Enemies (who were never any but thoſe of his Country) unreaſonably.

As for the uneaſineſs which it may create in ſome, to ſee the Actions of their Anceſtors diſplayed to their diſadvantage, it was unavoidable to any one who was reſolved to write a true account of things. Hiſtory, without this freedom, would be little more than a fulſome and inſipid Panegyrick, which would neither give Pleaſure, nor afford Inſtruction, nor deſerve Credit. And that memorable ſaying which the Biſhop records in his Hiſtory of the Princeſs of *Orange*, afterwards Queen *Mary*, may, in ſome meaſure, be applied to all who act in a publick Sphere; "That if "Princes will do ill things, they muſt expect "that the World will take revenges, ſince "they cannot reach their Perſons: That is but "a ſmall Suffering, far ſhort of what others "ſuffered from them." And I have often thought that it would be a very juſt Penance for thoſe who have injured the Publick by their evil Counſels and Miſmanagements, if, when they have done with Buſineſs, and retire from the Scene of Action, they would leave behind them a faithful Narration of their own Tranſactions, and would freely lay open their Errors, and warn Mankind againſt falling for the future into ſuch ſnares as they had laid for them during their Adminiſtration. This would be ſome compenſation

tion for the Evils which they had cauſed; and, inſtead of blackening their Characters, (as thoſe things do when recorded of them by others) would gain the Pardon, and raiſe the Compaſſion of Mankind in their favour. There have been a few inſtances in the World of this unuſual kind of Candor, and a very remarkable one of late; I mean the Memoirs of Cardinal *de Retz*; whoſe frank account of his own Faults, I dare ſay, with all impartial Men, muſt raiſe, inſtead of depreſſing, his Reputation. But ſince few have the Generoſity and Spirit to do this Juſtice to the World, there is no way left for Mankind to profit by the knowledge and obſervation of paſt Faults and Miſcarriages, but by ſome one or other taking upon them to tell thoſe Truths, which the Perſons moſt concerned will not acknowledge of themſelves; and thereby to teach us how to avoid thoſe Dangers in a ſucceeding Age, which we had like to have ſhipwreck'd upon in a *former one*. And I am perſuaded there are many worthy Gentlemen in this Nation, of ſo much true Virtue and Love to their Country, as to be willing rather to ſit under the natural uneaſineſs, which all Men of good Temper muſt feel, when they ſee their Anceſtors in a diſadvantageous light; than, out of a falſe tenderneſs of this kind, to endeavour to deprive the World of the Wiſdom they may gather from ſuch uſeful inſtruction: And would much rather undergo ſome ſmall reproach

proach to themſelves and their Families, to make the next Generation wiſer and better, than, by ſtudiouſly concealing theſe things, to perpetuate the folly, the ignorance, and the unhappineſs of Mankind.

I do not wonder indeed that there are found ſome Men, of a lower form of Underſtanding, and of baſer Spirits, who, either out of a weak or blind Zeal for their Party, or a partial Fondneſs for their Friends and Relations, are led to an abhorrence of any work of this Nature. But their words have but ſmall weight with the better and more reaſonable part of Mankind, and are diſregarded, as the overflowings of impotent Paſſion and unjuſt Reſentment. As they gain litte attention, they do not merit any anſwer.

But, as for thoſe who conceive that there are ſeveral Errors in a Hiſtory of this kind, and who, out of a juſt regard to Truth, endeavour to rectify them, and not to let Miſtakes paſs upon Poſterity for Truths; the World is highly obliged to them, if they can perform what they undertake, providing they do not do it in ſuch a manner as to deſtroy their own Credit by their way of writing, and by ſhowing a manifeſt partiality in their Cenſures. And, as the Author of the Hiſtory in queſtion himſelf, had he been alive, if his deſire was only to ſet forth the Truth, muſt have thought himſelf highly obliged to ſuch Perſons; ſo thoſe who are any ways

concerned

concerned in his Memory, either from Friendſhip or Relation, cannot be offended by what they do of this kind; but muſt rather eſteem it, if they deal ingenuouſly, a Service to the true intention of his Hiſtory, by correcting it where it has erred, and confirming it where it cannot be found fault with or amended by them.

Indeed, when I ſaw the *former* kind of Perſons ſatisfying themſelves with mere ſcandal and abuſe, and unable to overthrow the leaſt Circumſtance of the matters of Fact which are related, I was in no great pain for the Credit of the Author: But, on the contrary, I felt in my own Mind a greater eſteem for him than I had conceived before, ſince I found he was the Butt of ſuch Mens malice and ſlander; who ſeem to have no other Reaſon for their Averſion to him, but his conſtant and zealous Affection to his Country, and the great Services he rendered it while he lived, and has endeavoured to render it after his Death, in the Hiſtory he left behind him.

But when I heard of a Paper publiſhed with a Name to it, and the Name of a Doctor of Divinity, I was in ſome hopes to find his Performance of the *latter* kind; and to ſee ſome great Error in the Biſhop's Hiſtory ſet right. But upon reading it, I ſoon perceived it was of the *firſt* ſort; a mere Libel, ſcurrilouſly detracting from the Biſhop's Character, with-

out overturning one word of his Hiſtory, or in the leaſt ſhaking his Credibility as an Hiſtorian.

I own the Doctor has acted a fairer part than ſome others, in prefixing his Name to his Libel: By which he has effectually prevented any miſchief it can do, with all thoſe that know him; as his performance it ſelf will make him ſufficiently known to all thoſe who never heard of him before, to heal any Wounds that he has given to the Biſhop's Memory.

When I had run over this noble Performance, I at firſt thought indeed it ſcarce deſerved any notice to be taken of it. I depended upon it, that Mankind had too much underſtanding, and too much good nature, to regard any thing written in ſuch a manner. But, when I conſidered it again with more care, I feared that Matters of Fact told with ſuch aſſurance and ſolemnity might make ſome impreſſion, tho' delivered in never ſo low a Style. And I thought my ſelf in ſome meaſure obliged to take up the Defence of the Author of the Hiſtory, againſt this *ſcandalous Writer*, in common Juſtice and Gratitude for the Pleaſure and Inſtruction which I have received from it.

But, in order to proſecute my deſign, of defending the Biſhop's Memory againſt the iniquity of this inſult upon it; and yet at the ſame time not to tire the Patience of Mankind with following ſo mean a Writer thro' ſeventy

ſeventy Pages of heavy Calumny; I ſhall only obſerve enough to ſhew, how little Credit can be given to the Doctor in what he delivers upon his own Knowledge and Memory; and leave his Reaſonings and Concluſions to the common Senſe and common Juſtice of Mankind.

I ſhall therefore only conſider this Man as a Witneſs riſing up, and giving Teſtimony againſt the Truth of the Biſhop's Hiſtory. And, according to the common way in examining Evidence, I ſhall,

I. Examine into the Character of the Witneſs: And,

II. Into the Evidence which he delivers.

I. As for the Character of the Witneſs.

A Witneſs, to deſerve Credit in relating Facts of this nature, muſt be a Man of an unblemiſhed Reputation as to Integrity: And muſt not appear to be poſſeſs'd with Pique and Reſentment towards the Man he bears Witneſs againſt, or to be diſpoſed to calumniate him; for a notorious ſlanderer can never be a good Evidence.

Now as to theſe two Points (the Doctor's Integrity and his Impartiality) I ſhall examine the Doctor's Character, as he has here repreſented it to us himſelf. I ſhall not rake into his private Life and Converſation. I ſhall leave him to reconcile, the beſt he can, his Behaviour for many Years in *Holland*, and the Intimacy and Familiarity with which he

confeſſes he was at King *James*'s Court abroad, *p.* 15, 16, 17. with his coming over to *England* at the latter end of the late Queen's Reign, and taking the Oaths for a Benefice which was then conferred upon him.

I ſhall neglect all ſuch cloſe enquiries concerning him; and ſhall only conſider him in the view he gives us of himſelf in this Libel.

And if I ſhew him manifeſtly to be a Man carried to vent falſe and calumniating *Reports* of Biſhop *Burnet*, by the Pique and Reſentment which he appears to have born towards him, it will be ſufficient for my purpoſe. And, I think, that then I may very lawfully ſet him aſide, as an Evidence not at all to be relied upon in this Point. And I do not deſire to expoſe his Character any further, than the doing Juſtice to the Biſhop's Memory, which he attacks with ſo much rancour, and with ſo much aſſurance, makes it abſolutely neceſſary for me to do.

Now I appeal to all the World, whether this whole Libel of the Doctor's is not rather to be ſtyled a Satyr and bitter Invective, than Impartial Remarks on a Hiſtory. *Free* they are indeed, as he calls them in his Title Page: He might have entitled them *Bold* if he had pleaſed. But *Impartial*, I believe, no one, who can take the pains to read them, will allow them to be.

His calling the Biſhop *peeviſh and ill-natured*, (*p.* 73, as it ſhould be, tho' it is wrong printed 65,) is too groſs to paſs, when there are ſo many ſtill alive who knew him perſonally, and knew how far that was from being his Character. He ſuffered too much by his eaſineſs of Temper to deſerve this reproach. But I am not afraid that the Doctor will find any great Credit in this Point. It is an unlucky proof of the Doctor's own Temper, which will ſerve as an Antidote againſt the Malignity of his Libel. And I wiſh the Doctor had not given ſo freſh an inſtance of that *peeviſhneſs and ill-nature*, which the Biſhop complains of (not in *All*, but) in *many Clergy men*.

The Doctor in the ſame Page reflects on the Ambition of the Biſhop; and ſeems unwilling to believe what the Biſhop relates of his *having often refuſed a Biſhoprick*. But the Argument from his bare belief, depending wholly on his Judgment, is not a very formidable one; and ſo needs no anſwer.

But then a Calumny which he adds, at the ſame time owning that he had it only from common *Report*, is worth obſerving; becauſe it plainly diſcovers his ready diſpoſition to believe and to ſpread any Story to the prejudice of the Biſhop, tho' never ſo ſtupidly contrived, or improbable. He ſays, that the Biſhop *having received News of the Biſhoprick of* Salisbury*'s being void, made application to*

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ſome for it; *but not perceiving ſuch a ready and favourable Diſpoſition as he deſired, he one Day took the liberty to ſpeak to the King himſelf in the preſence of many: The King anſwered, that* he would conſider of it, *which is ſaid was his uſual anſwer, when Propoſals did not pleaſe him. However, the King no ſooner ſaid ſo, than the Doctor kneeled to kiſs his Hands, which being before ſo many, 'twas thought fit to confirm it*, &c. Now it is hard to tell whether Malice or Stupidity prevails moſt in this ridiculous Story. It is neither agreeable to the way of obtaining Preferment, to ask it of a Prince in ſo publick a manner: Nor is it like the known Temper of King *William*, to ſuffer himſelf to be impoſed upon ſo groſsly: Nor can Biſhop *Burnet* be believed to have been ſo ignorant of the World, as to expoſe himſelf to a thing which muſt have for ever blemiſhed his Reputation. But that which proves that this Report could not be true, is, that Biſhop *Ward*, his Predeceſſor in the See of *Salisbury*, died ſome conſiderable time before the Prince and Princeſs of *Orange* were declared King and Queen by the Convention. And therefore the Biſhop could not ask it of the *King*, upon *having received the News of that See's being void*, as the Doctor's *Report* goes. The Doctor might have taken the pains himſelf to examine this, before he publiſhed this idle *Report*; unleſs he was afraid of loſing the opportunity of ſpreading a Scandal, which he could ſafely ſay he did not know

to

to be *falſe* when he publiſhed it. But a Divine, at leaſt, ought to know that a ſcandalous Story of another is *true*, before he prints it; if even then it be becoming his Character to ſpread it in ſo malicious a manner. And, if there had been any truth in this Story, no doubt his Enemies, who were without Number, as well as without Mercy, would have often made the World ring with ſuch a ſhameleſs Procedure. But the Doctor is the firſt Man who ever, I believe, in publick ventured to relate this ſcandalous Falſhood of him; tho', it muſt be confeſſed, he takes out the Sting of the Slander, by owning that it is only a *Report*. Whether he is the Inventer of it, I do not know: But I think he is obliged to tell from whom he heard it, to diſcharge himſelf of the load of the Calumny. And, if he does not, I doubt, the ill contrivance of the Story will be apt to make the World ſuſpect that the Doctor is the Author of it himſelf.

The Truth of that Matter was: (And I believe ſeveral are alive who remember it, and could atteſt it, if it were needful:) The former Biſhop of *Salisbury* died in the Winter 1688, during the *Interregnum*. The Prince of *Orange* would not pretend to engage in diſpoſing of Biſhopricks till he was made King. But all the Town, conſidering the great Services which Doctor *Burnet* had done before, and in the Revolution, (Services which, as a conſiderable Manager in Dr. *Sacheverel*'s Trial expreſſes

expreſſes himſelf, *one part of the Nation will never forgive, and the other will never forget*;) gave the Biſhoprick to him with one Voice. Many ſpoke to the Prince in the Biſhop's Favour, without his knowledge. The Prince made them no Anſwer. But a few Days after he was ſet on the Throne, he, of his own Motion, named him to that See; and did it in terms more obliging than uſually fell from him. This is the true account of his Promotion.

And now I leave it to the World to judge, whether this ſingle Calumny is not ſufficient to ſink the whole Credit and Weight of any Teſtimony which the ſcandalous ſpreader of it can deliver, with relation to the Biſhop's Hiſtory. For it is more than probable, that he who ſhews himſelf ſo forward to take up ſuch an unlikely lie to ſlander the Biſhop, will either have wickedneſs enough to invent downright Falſhoods himſelf, or weakneſs enough to miſtake in his other ſcandalous *Reports*, with regard to the Biſhop.

I might very fairly leave the whole to reſt here; and conclude that, ſince the Author has ſhewn himſelf unworthy of Credit, by venting ſuch groſs Calumnies, the Matters of Fact which he delivers ought not to be believed upon his bare Word: Eſpecially ſince, for the Truth of theſe Matters of Fact, he appeals (*p.* 9.) *to Papers which he has loſt*; and hopes that Men will be ſo *charitable* to him as to believe him *on his own word*, and eſteems it

prejudice

prejudice in thoſe who will not. I ſhould have been ſomewhat diſpoſed to the Charity of believing him *on his Word*, if he had not forfeited all ſuch Charity, by ſhewing himſelf a downright Calumniator, as I have proved above. But, as it is, I muſt own my fear, that his Diſpoſition to believe any ill that was told him of the Biſhop, has been often very aſſiſtant to his Memory; eſpecially when I find him remembring ſo minutely a Converſation that paſſed in his hearing when he was but *ten Years old*, as he tells us, *p.* 28.

But, becauſe I think this Hiſtory of the Biſhop's too uſeful to the World to neglect any thing that may unjuſtly diminiſh his Reputation and Credibility, I ſhall go on to the

II[d] Point I mentioned; which was, to examine into the Evidence which the Doctor delivers.

His firſt Remark from *p.* 1. to *p.* 24. contains nothing that concerns the Biſhop; but only *p.* 13, where he tells us he would not have mentioned a *Paſſage* in a Book of *Ferguſon's*, if the Biſhop *had not thought fit to mention that to which it relates*, p. 227, 228. One would have thought that he had been going to diſprove, upon his own knowledge, what the Biſhop relates in the places referred to. But he only entertains us in the following pages with a long Confutation of what Mr. *Ferguſon* (an Author to whom no Man, I believe,

pays any great regard) had ſpread of King *James*'s having had twenty or thirty Iſſues upon him; of which the Biſhop has not ſaid one word. As for his reaſoning againſt what the Biſhop has advanced upon the Authority of the famous Phyſician, Dr. *Willis*, and others, with relation to King *James*'s ill habit of Body, it is not worth anſwering: Nor was it my intention to deſcend to argue with this Writer. I ſhall only obſerve here by the by, that the Point which the Doctor labours at to prove; that King *James* was free enough from *Iſſues* and other *Diſtempers*, to make it poſſible for him to have had healthy Children; will not ſerve the Argument he ſeems chiefly to be aiming at, to prove that the Pretender may be King *James*'s Son.

The Biſhop in the 227th, and 228th Pages of his Hiſtory, delivers the Opinions of People of that time concerning that King's State of Body, and eſpecially of Dr. *Willis*. But the main proofs of the Pretender's Illegitimacy come long after; and do not depend upon the ſtate of the King's Health, but on a number of matters of Fact which the Biſhop there collects, to prove that the Pretender was not the Queen's Child, and that if the Queen then had a Child That Child died, and that the ſecond Child died likewiſe, and that the preſent Pretender was the third ſuppoſititious Son. The whole account lies toge-

ther

ther in the Biſhop's Hiſtory from *p.* 748, to *p.* 754.

The reſt of this firſt Remark of the Doctor's is wholly employed in refuting ſome Stories which *Ferguſon* had vented: And can no otherwiſe affect the Credit of the Biſhop's Hiſtory, than by inferring, that becauſe *Ferguſon* told ſome ſecret Hiſtories which were falſe, and were *ſold for five Shillings*, when they were *worth but two*, as the Doctor very weightily informs us, *p.* 11; therefore no one is worthy of Credit who tells any matter of Fact that is not generally known. It is juſt as good an Argument againſt the Doctor's preſent Libel; and a ſtronger one, becauſe he has produced the Pattern which he ſeems himſelf to have copied after.

The Doctor indeed hints at another Reaſon for his taking ſo much pains to diſcredit *Ferguſon*, which carries more Malice under it. He ſays, *p.* 21. *One Motive for publiſhing this now, is, to prevent ſome other ſecret Hiſtory which may be impoſed on the World, which hath no Foundation but* Ferguſon's *bold Aſſertions, or of ſome others like him.*

By this it would ſeem that the Doctor intended to get People to believe, without directly ſaying it himſelf, that the Biſhop's Informations were from *Ferguſon:* For it's plain that he adds, *or of ſome others like him*, only to cover himſelf, if he ſhould be charged with having made ſo ſenſeleſs an Allegation. For

the Biſhop expreſsly tells us, *p.* 542 of his Hiſtory, that he knew *a private thing of* Ferguſon, *by which it appeared he was a profligate Knave, and could cheat thoſe who truſted him intirely. And that he would never ſee him, or ſpeak with him; and did not know his Face till the Revolution.* Is it likely that, while he tells us he had this Opinion and Knowledge of a Man, and that for that Reaſon he never would be in his Company, he ſhould have received the Informations and Accounts from Him which he has given us in his Hiſtory?

The Doctor's inſolent abuſe of thoſe great and worthy Men, from whom the Biſhop tells us he had his Knowledge and Information of our Affairs in thoſe Times, in calling *them others like him*, i. e. *Ferguſon*, deſerves no Anſwer, but one that I will not allow my ſelf to give him.

IN his ſecond Remark, *p.* 27. the Doctor tells us that *the Biſhop confeſſeth ſuch privacy to the Deſigns and Intrigues of the Earl of* Eſſex *and Lord* Ruſſel, *and ſome others, that it is ſomewhat ſtrange how he eſcaped.* It is ſomewhat ſtrange indeed how he eſcaped the iniquity of thoſe Times, when neither Law nor Juſtice were in the leaſt regarded, but every Man who was thought obnoxious was deſtroyed by violence, againſt all Law and Right. But that he *confeſſes* that he was Privy to Lord *Ruſſel* and Lord *Eſſex*'s Deſigns

is directly falſe. For, *p.* 540, and 541, he declares that he did not know what their Deſigns were, nor did approve of the Deſigns which he ſuſpected they had; and that he told them as much. And he owns his ignorance of the truth of that whole matter; and ſays, that Mr. *Hamden* had promiſed him to give him a particular account of it after the Revolution, but died before he could get it from him. Now this is directly contrary to what this ſhameleſs Man affirms that he *confeſſes*. And therefore the Doctor here proves himſelf a downright falſifier.

The Doctor, *p.* 27, *&c.* relates ſeveral little idle Stories of the Biſhop when he was about 22 Years old; which, ſuppoſing them all true, do not in the leaſt affect the Character and Reputation which he afterwards gained in the World. But I muſt obſerve, that all theſe *Reports* entirely depend on the Credit of the Doctor's own word; and I have already obſerved how much is due to that. Beſides, the improbability of the Doctor's remembring ſo exactly ſo many Particulars which paſſed in Converſation when he was ten Years old; and his wiſe concluſion that his Uncle, Biſhop *Scougal*, approved of his calling Mr. *Burnet a Fool*, becauſe he *gave him* but *a gentle flap on the Face, and ſaid to him with an angry Countenance*, &c. *p.* 29, 30. is ſufficient to weigh down any Credit the Doctor

can

can deſerve, either as to his Veracity or his Underſtanding.

But *p.* 33. he comes to a more material Circumſtance, and complains loudly of the Biſhop's *want of Candor and Ingenuity* in relating it, *p.* 217. of his Hiſtory. It regards the Letter which the Biſhop, when he was 23 Years old, writ to the Biſhops of *Scotland*. It would be too tireſome to the Reader to go thro' every particular of it. I ſhall refer to the account the Biſhop gives of that Action, compared with the account the Doctor gives of it in this Libel. Only I muſt obſerve, that the Doctor delivers all this merely on his own Credit, which the falſhoods and ſlanders he ſtands convicted of, I think, have ſufficiently blaſted. And I muſt further obſerve, that it is a very unaccountable thing, that among ſo many Enemies as the Biſhop had in *Scotland*, in King *Charles* and King *James*'s time, no one ever told the Story in publick ſo to his diſadvantage, as the Doctor ſtands up now and tells it, when the Biſhop is dead, who only could have confuted him. I think this ought to oblige him either to produce ſome better Voucher for his Narration, than his own bare word; or elſe to ſit down under the Character of a mere ſlanderer, who advances what he can't prove, and what is very unlikely to be true.

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The Doctor owns that *he is the only Perſon now alive, that can ſet this Matter right.* If ſo, the Matter can never be ſet right; for I have ſufficiently ſhewn that, of all Men alive, the Doctor is the leaſt worthy of Credit in theſe Points.

His inſinuation, *p.* 34. *that the publiſhing this Hiſtory was put off ſo long, that all might be gone who could correct it, or contradict it*, is mere Malice. A more Chriſtian Temper would have ſupplied a better natured Reaſon; which was, not to gall Perſons that were alive too ſorely, by telling their Faults publickly, which could not have been avoided in a faithful and true Narration.

The Doctor pretends to deliver his account of this Fact *upon the Authority of his dear Uncle* Scougal *Biſhop of* Aberdeen. But he tells it from him upon his Memory. And therefore the Publick ought to be well acquainted with the Strength of his Memory, before they are obliged to believe him. And another Point they ought to be ſatisfied about is, his Judgment; for a weak injudicious Man very often miſtakes what he hears, and underſtands it wrong. And further, his Integrity ought to be unſhaken, which I doubt the Doctor's cannot be ſaid to be, after what has been produced againſt him.

As for the Doctor's Memory, I have not the happineſs of being acquainted with him enough to give any account of it.

As to his Integrity, and his Judgment, they appear ſufficiently from this very Narration of his. I ſhall conſider both the account he gives of the Letter which Biſhop *Burnet* wrote to the Biſhops, and of the Proceedings of the Biſhops upon it.

As for the Letter it ſelf, I ſee no difference between this Author's account of it, and the Biſhop's, *p.* 217. of his Hiſtory; but that the Biſhop tells the ſubſtance of it very ſhortly, as ſuch a thing deſerved, and the Doctor recites ſeveral Particulars upon his Memory. But then the Doctor's Diſpoſition to miſrepreſent the Biſhop, got the better of his Candor and Integrity, when he charges the Biſhop, *p.* 33. *as glorying in it, and juſtifying it*; and *p.* 38. ſays, that *ſelf-conceit ſo blinded Mr.* Burnet, *that he could not diſcern his Fault at that time, nor yet afterwards*; *for in the Relation he gives of it in his Hiſtory, he both commends IT*, (*i. e.* the Letter) *and himſelf for refuſing to ask Pardon for it.* Now one would think the Doctor might have had ſome fear upon him, that People would not take his word here, but would conſult the Hiſtory it ſelf, and detect the falſhood of his Aſſertion. Or if his Memory does not ſerve him better in what Biſhop *Scougal* told him many Years ago, than in what he has lately read in Biſhop *Burnet*'s own Hiſtory, we cannot put any great confidence in it, whatever he may do himſelf.

For

For what the Doctor here aſſerts, of the Biſhop's commending his own Letter in his Hiſtory, is abſolutely falſe. The Biſhop calls his writing it *a ſalley*, p. 216. He ſays, *p.* 217. *He communicated it to none. This made it not to be in all the parts of it ſo well digeſted, as it otherwiſe might have been: And*, he ſays, *he was then but three and twenty.* Is not this plainly blaming himſelf of Indiſcretion, and of drawing a Letter in an ill-digeſted manner? Where is the want of *Candor and Ingenuity* here? It is indeed too much wanting ſomewhere elſe.

And, as to what the Doctor ſays, *p.* 38. that the Biſhop *commends himſelf for refuſing to ask Pardon for his Letter*, neither is that true. The Biſhop, *p.* 218, only ſays, that he did not do it. Tho' he might think the Action not well weighed, yet he might not ſee any ſuch Crime in writing a private Letter of Admonition to the Biſhops, as to deſerve his asking them Pardon for it. A Man may blame his own imprudence, and yet not ask Pardon for it as a Crime, unleſs he thinks it one.

I ſhall, in the next place, conſider the account the Doctor gives of the Proceedings of the Biſhops upon this Letter.

He gives a long Narrative of what the Biſhop thought only worthy of a ſhort one in a publick Hiſtory. And what he tells in particular of Biſhop *Scougall*'s Behaviour on this oc-

caſion, if it be true, agrees with the Character the Biſhop gives of him, *p.* 217. *a Man of great Piety and Prudence, but too much under* Sharp's *Conduct, and too eaſy to him.*

But indeed the Doctor tells us, *p.* 39, 40, of a *Prevarication* in Biſhop *Burnet*, which he does not own of himſelf; *in giving Copies of it* (this Letter) *to his Presbyterian Friends and others, who handed it ſecretly about the Town; yea, Copies of it could be purchaſed for a little Money, before thoſe ſent to ſome of the Biſhops could reach them*; and this after having ſaid to the Biſhops in his Letter, as the Doctor acquaints us *p.* 36, 37, *That he wrote ſincerely out of Reſpect to their Perſons and Order, and not to expoſe them, and therefore would uſe no Amanuenſis, but be at the pains to write all the Letters with his own Hand, without conſulting or communicating the Letter to any.* Here, indeed, would be great *Prevarication*, if, after this Declaration, he had *communicated* it. But how is it proved that he did? By the Doctor's ſaying, *a Diſcovery was made of it*, p. 39, and *p.* 40. *That he ſhewed ſome Confuſion, when it was mentioned to him by the Biſhops.* Not a word how this Diſcovery was made, or whether it was proved or not. The Doctor himſelf owns that SOME of the Biſhops might have received his Letter, before he gave it to his *Presbyterian Friends and others.* And is it not probable that Archbiſhop *Sharp*, then reſiding

reſiding at *Edenburgh*, was one of thoſe SOME who had received his Letter at firſt, before it was *handed about the Town*. And might not *Sharp* himſelf be ſuppoſed to have given about Copies of it, if he thought he could expoſe Mr. *Burnet* by doing it? And is it at all unlike that Man's Character, to have been himſelf the Author of what he afterwards charged falſely on Mr. *Burnet?* And, if Mr. *Burnet* was in ſome Confuſion when ſuch a groſs *Prevarication* was boldly charged upon him, is it any great wonder? Might not an old cunning Politician, like *Sharp*, be able to confound a young Man of three and twenty, let him be armed with never ſo much Innocence and Courage? But what convinces me of the abſolute falſhood of this Story, is this; That if this *groſs Prevarication* had been ever clearly made out againſt Mr. *Burnet*, before all the Biſhops of *Scotland*, it is not to be imagined that he would not often have been told of it in his life-time by his moſt inveterate Enemies? Would ſo ſcandalous an Action of his have ſlept ſo long, till this Man awakened it about ſixty Years after it was plainly and publickly proved? Can it be believed by any Man of ſenſe, that ſuch worthy Perſons as Biſhop *Leighton*, Mr. *Charteris*, and Mr. *Nairn*, would have always ſhewn ſo great a regard to him, after his having been detected in ſo foul a *Prevarication*? Or

is it probable, with ſuch a blemiſh on his Integrity, that he ſhould have been ſoon after called to be Profeſſor of Divinity at *Glaſcow*, and employed ſo much as he was in the Project of healing the Breaches of that Church, and of bringing in the Presbyterians to a Comprehenſion? Theſe are probabilities on Biſhop *Burnet*'s ſide, which far out-weigh the dark and improbable account which the Doctor here gives of this Matter, on his Memory, and on his bare Word.

There is another material Difference in the Doctor's account and the Biſhop's: The Biſhop ſays, *p.* 218. of his Hiſtory, That *great pains were taken to make him ask Pardon, but to no purpoſe: So* Sharp *let the thing fall.* The Doctor, when he comes to this part of his Narrative, *p.* 42. does not directly contradict the Biſhop's account; but, like a true Calumniator, ſpeaks in ſuch a manner as to lead an unwary Reader into a belief that the Biſhop has not told the truth, without directly aſſerting the contrary himſelf in downright terms, in which he might have been detected and expoſed. The Doctor ſays, *p.* 42. *it was agreed, upon his humble Submiſſion and Acknowledgment, to let him go with a Rebuke. I dare not ſay, that Knees were expreſly mentioned to me*; (*viz.* by Biſhop *Scougal*;) *but I always underſtood it that he was required to confeſs his faults, and to ask Pardon upon his Knees.* And

now

now any one would expect to hear that accordingly Mr. *Burnet* did ask Pardon, either ſtanding, or ſitting, or kneeling. Not a word of this is told him by Biſhop *Scougal*. But he turns it off, and concludes his Story: *And, I am ſure, if he had refuſed it, neither the Biſhop of* Aberdeen, *nor any other, would have pleaded for him, but proceeded to the Sentence of Deprivation, as an obſtinate irreclaimable Perſon.* Here we have no matter of Fact told us; but inſtead of it we are preſented with the Doctor's own judicious Reaſoning and Concluſion.

And thus after all the Doctor's exclamations againſt the Biſhop's diſingenuity and want of Candor, and ſolemn Proteſtations, and offers to take his Oath of the truth of what he himſelf ſays, when he comes to the point, he does not contradict the Biſhop in the Matter of Fact, but informs us wiſely that he cannot believe it to have been as Biſhop *Burnet* relates it.

The Truth will appear clearly enough to any Man of Underſtanding, from comparing the Doctor's account with the Biſhop's: That the Biſhops of *Scotland* inſiſted, as Biſhop *Burnet* tells us, on his asking Pardon; but, finding him reſolved not to do it, let the thing fall. Now a Man, whoſe Underſtanding would not have ſerved him ſo far as to unravel this knotty point of Hiſtory, if he had had

had but ſome ſhare of modeſty, and had not been carried away by an ill-natured diſpoſition to ſlander, would not have ventured to contradict the Biſhop with ſo much aſſurance, and ſuch ſolemnity, and yet not have been able to affirm the contrary in point of Fact to what the Biſhop had ſaid. But it is happy for Mankind when Slanderers are as deficient in their Underſtanding as in their Good Nature: For in that caſe the Blunders of the Head prevent the Miſchief which the Malice of the Heart would otherwiſe create.

The Doctor ſhews his Chriſtian Temper in his repreſentation of the Biſhop's Retirement after this Tranſaction, in pretending to know what were the private Sentiments of the Biſhop's Heart. He ſays, *p.* 43. Mr. *Burnet, not truly humbled, but ſomewhat mortified by what has been related, retired to his Country Pariſh, and lurked there for ſome time, till the thing ſhould be forgot.* The Biſhop ſays of himſelf, *p.* 218. *That it might appear that he had not done it* (viz. writ that Letter) *upon any factious Deſign, he entered into a very cloſe State of Retirement, and gave himſelf wholly to his Studies and the Duties of his Function.* Which is the Truth, and which Malice, I leave the World to judge. It is plain the Biſhop had no occaſion to retire, if *the greater part approved of what he had done, and if Duke* Lauderdale

derdale *and all his Friends were delighted with it*, as the Biſhop tells us, and is very probable from the circumſtance of Affairs at that time.

As for the idle Stories which the Doctor relates of the Biſhop, from *p.* 43. to *p.* 54, upon his own Credit, which I think is by this time of no great weight; they are not worth anſwering; and much leſs his Reflections upon the Biſhop from his own Judgment of him: So I ſhall paſs theſe over, and leave them to the Juſtice of Mankind.

As for his Reflections, and the little ſilly Stories he has pick'd up, concerning the Biſhop's Memoirs of the Dukes of *Hamilton*, they are not worthy of any notice; and, I believe, in the Judgment of no Man of ſenſe, will in the leaſt ſhake the eſtabliſhed Reputation and Credit of that Hiſtory.

And ſo I ſhall leave them as I found them. But tho' the Doctor's Reflections on the Biſhop, which depend merely upon his Judgment, are not of moment enough to require any Juſtification of the Biſhop; yet I ſhall examine one or two of them, which may ſeem with ſome to tend to his diſadvantage.

The Doctor reflects, *p.* 54, on his relating his private Converſation with King *Charles* the II^d, which may at firſt ſight appear diſhonourable. But if the Doctor had had the Good Nature or Candor to obſerve, that

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in this private Converſation with that King, nothing is told to his Diſadvantage, but rather to his Honour; in being ſo eaſy to hear of his own Faults, and to acknowledge them, and declaring againſt all baſe and ill-natured Actions; he would have had more reaſon to conclude, that King *Charles*'s Memory was in ſo far obliged to the Biſhop's Hiſtory, whatever other faults he may relate of him elſewhere. I think the Biſhop gives an account of his Converſations with that King but in three places, *p.* 356, *p.* 437, and *p.* 508; and I refer the reader to theſe places to judge by his own Eyes whether I am in the right or not.

Another Reflection the Doctor caſts on the Biſhop, is *p.* 55. for diſcovering what Duke *Lauderdale* had told him while they were in *Friendſhip and Intimacy* together. The Biſhop has fully and fairly told this Story of himſelf, and *leaves himſelf to the Cenſure of the Reader*, *p.* 379, 380; which I hope is no mark of Inſincerity in him. But I believe the Doctor will find it a hard matter to reſolve the *Queſtion*, which the Biſhop propoſes there; *How far even Confidence ought to bind a Man, when the Deſigns are very wicked, and the Perſon continued ſtill in the ſame Poſt and Capacity of executing them?*

Theſe Deſigns of Duke *Lauderdale*, which he related to the Houſe of Commons, were

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no leſs, than a Scheme for *bringing in an Army from* Scotland *to tame thoſe in* England, as the Duke expreſſed it, *p.* 355. of the Biſhop's Hiſtory; *i. e.* to ſubdue the Liberties of *England*, to deſtroy the Power of Parliaments, and to render the King abſolute.

The Doctor has revived, *p.* 56, 57. ſome old ſlanders which were caſt upon the Biſhop, and anſwered by him long ago, with relation to his Hiſtory of the Reformation. I cannot ſay he calumniates the Biſhop here, becauſe he owns, in effect, *p.* 57, that they are nothing to the purpoſe. However, there could be no reaſon for his repeating them here, unleſs it were to give an ill impreſſion of the Biſhop, without being liable himſelf to the charge of Calumny.

But the Doctor has here given us ſuch a Specimen of himſelf, as may alone ſerve to ſatisfy the World how much Credit is due to him. He ſays, *p.* 57, *In both Volumes of his Hiſtory Dr.* Burnet *reflects ſeverely on Sir* William Sanders. This is only a miſtake. The Doctor thought Sir *William Sanders*, who lived in King *Charles* the Second's time, was the Author of the Hiſtory writ in Queen *Elizabeth*'s time, about a hundred Years before, by another of that Name. But when the Doctor afterwards founds upon this miſtake a Matter of Fact, of which he declares he was an Eyewitneſs; and ſays, he ſaw a *Copy*

of a Letter from Doctor Burnet *to one he has forgot, to be imparted to Lady* Sanders, *who had ſent by ſome an Expoſtulation for the rough uſage of her deceaſed Husband*, in which the Biſhop *asks her Pardon*, and *promiſes to ſoften* ſuch *Expreſſions in another Edition*; as if both the Biſhop and the Lady had taken *Sanders* the Hiſtorian for Sir *William Sanders*; I cannot ſo eaſily acquit his Integrity. He muſt anſwer for himſelf.

The Doctor again, *p.* 58. mentions the Biſhop's Cenſure on Archbiſhop of *Uſher* in his Life of Biſhop *Bedel*. But if he had told out what the Cenſure was, he would have taken away the Sting of this *inſtance of Biſhop* Burnet's *haſtineſs and raſhneſs*. This ſevere Cenſure of Biſhop *Burnet*'s, was no more than blaming Archbiſhop *Uſher* very gently, for not being forward enough in aſſiſting Biſhop *Bedel* in ſome Reformations he attempted in Church Government; without paſſing any other Reflection on that great Man's Memory, or any abuſe of him, as one would be apt to imagine he had done from this repreſentation of the Doctor's; but on the contrary, giving a very exalted Character of him at length, *p.* 85, 86, 87, in the Edition 1685.

But in this ſame Page the Doctor paſſes a much heavier and much more unjuſt Cenſure on Biſhop *Burnet*, and appeals to his *Letters of Travels to prove his Credulity*. But let

let us conſider what theſe Proofs of his *Credulity* from his Letters are, which the Doctor delivers with ſuch Confidence. One of them is, That when the Biſhop is *ſhewing the Miſery of thoſe Countries where Popery and deſpotick Power prevail*, the Doctor ſays, *there are certainly too many Proofs of it, but ſome of his* (the Biſhop's) *are too much ſtretched.* But what thoſe *ſome* are, he has not vouchſafed to tell us.

Another Proof of the Biſhop's Credulity, (as I muſt ſuppoſe the Doctor meant it, becauſe it comes between two other proofs of it,) is, that Cardinal *Howard thought himſelf ill uſed, after his generous Treatment of the Biſhop*; I preſume he means in the Biſhop's publiſhing the truth of the Court of *Rome.* But how this proves his *Credulity* I cannot imagine. Nor does it reflect on the Biſhop's Gratitude; unleſs the Cardinal's Civility was to ſtop his Mouth, and oblige him to ſay nothing to the diſhonour of the Papacy; which is an inference that I believe no one will make: And I dare ſay the Cardinal never did.

A third inſtance of the Biſhop's *Credulity* is, that *an ingenious Gentleman was with* the Doctor *in* Holland, *and told him that* Burnet's *Letters were his Companions in his Travels, and that his Obſervations contradicted them.* But what Credit this *ingenious Gentleman* deſerved, or *what thoſe Contradictions were*, we are left

to gueſs, and are to truſt the Doctor's Judgment for it.

He ſays *p.* 59, *ſome others have confirmed the ſame:* But who they are, we are left ignorant of likewiſe.

The Doctor ſays in the ſame place, whether upon his own Obſervation, or the Relation of others, we are not informed by him; That *in one of theſe Letters the Biſhop ſays that the oldeſt MSS. of the* N. T. *he met with was not* 800 *Years, which wanted that noted Text,* 1 John 5. 7.

Here, like the other Slanderers of the Biſhop, the Doctor has not thought it worth his while to examine the Biſhop's own words. The Biſhop ſpeaks of the MSS. which he ſaw, in which that Text was or was not to be found, in his firſt Letter from *Zurich*, *p.* 53. in the Edition of 1686. But he ſays not one word of the *oldeſt MSS. of the* N. T. He mentions indeed one MS. at *Zurich which*, he ſays, *ſeemed to be about* 800 *Years old*, which had made *Bullinger doubt much of that Text*, in which *he* (the Biſhop) *found the Paſſage was not*; but he believes *it was the Error or Omiſſion of the Copier*, and gives his Reaſons for his belief. He mentions another *ancient Latin Bible at* Baſil, *which* (he ſays) *is about* 800 *Years old, in which this Paſſage is wanting.* And he ſpeaks of no other MSS. of the N. T. *of* 800 *Years*, but theſe two. Which of theſe

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the Doctor means when he makes the Biſhop to have ſaid, the *oldeſt MSS. of the* N. T. *which he met with was NOT* 800 *Years old*; whether that at *Zurich* which the Biſhop ſays *ſeemed to be about* 800 *Years old*, or that at *Baſil* which he ſays expreſsly *was about* 800 *Years old*; I cannot gueſs; and I doubt he does not know himſelf. As for *Pere Simon*'s obſervation on Dr. *Burnet*, I wiſh he had told us where to find it. I muſt ſuſpect it till he does. For he has not given me much reaſon to take any thing upon his bare word.

The Doctor concludes the Scandal of this ſecond Remark, with a wiſe Story of his Uncle Biſhop *Scougal*, *p.* 59, *&c.* which amounts to no more, than that Biſhop *Scougal forbid* his Nephew *John* to furniſh Dr. *Burnet* with Memorials to write his Character. And I wiſh the Doctor had paid ſo much regard to his Uncle's Memory, as not to have given us ſuch an inſtance of his Rudeneſs and ill Judgment, if he tells us the Truth of him. And what he relates of him, *p.* 63, gives us the Key of the Biſhop's Cenſure of Dr. *Burnet*, if it was his. His Uncle ſaid, as the Doctor tells us, *Believe me*, John, *I am apprehenſive that his* (Dr. *Burnet*'s) *End will be ſuch, as will not give much Credit to any whom he commends.* And he explains what the poor Biſhop meant, by telling us, *That the Doctor* (Burnet) *had certainly gone to pot, as the Phraſe is, if the Revolution had not happened and ſucceeded.*

ceeded. That is, if this Nation had been ruined and enſlaved, Dr. *Burnet* would have periſhed with his Country: A Danger which will be his laſting Glory, with all true lovers of their Country. And I wiſh the Doctor had not ſo manifeſtly betrayed the weakneſs and timorouſneſs of his Uncle, (if he has not injured him in his Narration;) and the Diſpoſition of his own Mind, in contradiction to the Oaths he has taken, both to get, and to preſerve his Preferment.

I need make no further Reflections on this ſenſeleſs Story, by which the Doctor, I ſuppoſe, hoped to detract from Biſhop *Burnet*'s Character; but which, I dare ſay, will be looked upon by all wiſe and good Men, as a direct Teſtimony, dropped unawares from a malicious Enemy, and a groſs Calumniator, of the Biſhop's great and unmoveable firmneſs in conſulting the publick Intereſt of his Country, without regarding the private Danger of his Perſon.

The Doctor's third Remark I cannot think worthy of any Anſwer. It is only the Doctor's own reaſoning, which I ſhall truſt with the common ſenſe and reaſoning of Mankind.

I am ſorry that I have been forced to treat the Doctor with ſome Severity; which is neither agreeable to my Temper, nor would be juſtifiable, except on ſuch an occaſion as this; where a Doctor of Divinity, and a Clergyman, to the diſgrace of his Rank and Order, ſhall

ſhall venture to put his Name to mere Slander and Calumny, and to endeavour by that baſe Artifice to detract from a Man of ſuch Fame as Biſhop *Burnet* was in his Life-time, and is now, with all honeſt Men, after his Death; and to rob the World of the Wiſdom and Inſtruction which they may gather from his Hiſtory, by ſpreading falſe and ſcandalous Reflections on his Memory.

The Doctor indeed ſeems ſenſible of his own Conduct; and endeavours to eſcape Cenſure by pleading the Biſhop's Example; which he ought not to have done after he had blamed it, unleſs he thinks that an ill Example may innocently be followed. He ſays *p.* 70, that *the Biſhop is only treated as the Biſhop has treated others:* And goes on, *If clearing the the truth make it neceſſary to invalidate one's Teſtimony, or to derogate from his Authority, this cannot be counted Detraction.*

But I believe the World will not ſuffer the Doctor to skreen himſelf behind this ſuppoſition; when they now ſee the many Falſhoods and Inconſiſtencies detected, which the Doctor has heaped together, not to *invalidate his* (the Biſhop's) *Teſtimony*, (for that he has not done,) but to aſperſe his Memory unrighteouſly: And when they ſee, how far the Doctor has been from ſetting an Example himſelf of *that ſtrict regard to Truth, which he hoped and wiſhed* to find *in all who undertook the Examination of* this

this Hiſtory; and that he himſelf has lead the way (not of *refuting one lie with another*, as he ſays) but of refuting *Truth* with *Lies*; and has *ſuffered his Paſſions and Reſentments to tranſport him to Indecencies, beyond the Rules of Juſtice, and the Precepts of Chriſtian Charity*, and, I may add, of Chriſtian Truth and Veracity.

And, even ſuppoſing the Doctor had advanced nothing but Truth againſt the Biſhop in this Libel, (which I have ſufficiently ſhewn he has not,) I believe all Mankind will own, That there is a very great difference between an impartial and fair Relation, in Hiſtory, of the publick Errors and Miſcarriages of Men who have acted on the high Stage of Life, in order to admoniſh Poſterity by ſuch Examples, and to teach their Children Wiſdom; and the baſe and ſcurrilous way of a ſlanderous Libel, which rips up all the private Actions of a Man's Life, even in his youngeſt Years; and which can be of no uſe or inſtruction to the World; but ſerves only to gratify the Malice of the worſt part of Mankind, in defaming a Perſon, who paſſed thro' the Scene of Action with Fear and Reſpect from his Enemies, and with Applauſe and Affection from his Friends.

FINIS.